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Army Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz Remembered

Dialysis Unit Dedicated to Army Nurse Killed in Iraq

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer

Those who knew Army Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz recall her smile and positive attitude. They say that is the way she would have wanted to be remembered, and not how she died.

Ortiz was killed by enemy mortar fire on July 10, 2007 in Baghdad, becoming the first Army nurse to die in combat since the Vietnam War, but her memory lives on. A plaque honoring Ortiz was unveiled and dedicated at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) Dialysis Unit Aug. 7. She served as head nurse of the Dialysis Unit, Critical Care Nursing Services at the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) from 2001 to 2003.

Army Maj. Kristy Gould and Erica Cullen served with Ortiz in Iraq. They not only reflected on her smile, but also on her "glow, patience and positive attitude" which they said inspired others.

"She lit up a room and you felt at ease when she was around. No matter what was happening, you could just calm down and get it together when she was there and you knew it was going to be OK," said Cullen, who was also an Army captain in Iraq with Ortiz.

"With her, any situation could be worked through," Gould ex-



Photo by Bernard S. Little

The twin sister of Army Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz, also named Maria (left) and their father Jorge Ortiz (right) participate in a dedication ceremony Aug. 7 at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center honoring the Army captain by the naming of the Dialysis Unit after her.

plained. "She had a complete understanding of situations and she was compassionate."

Cullen agreed, adding Ortiz cared for everyone with the same passion regardless of their nationality. "I think this also showed up in the people she led, and it was great leadership to have."

Retired Sgt. 1st Class Steven L. Waldon, Ortiz's ward master in Iraq who shared an office with her, shared similar sentiments.

"We spent a lot of time together in the hospital," he said. "I remember

her drive and the passion she had for patients. She made sure patients were taken care of no matter what. They came first and everything else was second. Her love and drive for her fellow man and patient care were what she was all about," he said.

Ortiz's twin sister, also named Maria, unveiled the plaque which will hang in WRNMMC's Dialysis Unit honoring the Soldier.

Army Col. James D. Oliver, chief of Nephrology Service at WRNMMC, read a brief biography of

Ortiz, who was born April 24, 1967 in Camden, N.J., and grew up in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. She initially enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1991 and was stationed in Puerto Rico. She earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Puerto Rico and was commissioned in the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) in 1999. She also earned a master's degree in quality systems management from the National Graduate School of Quality Management in Falmouth, Mass.

After serving as head

nurse of the Dialysis Unit at WRAMC from 2001 to 2003, Ortiz became the chief nurse of General Medicine at Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., before deploying to Iraq with the 28th Combat Support Hospital, 3rd Medical Command in September 2006. "That's her military biography, but the presence of all of us here and the reason for us coming together attests that there's so much more," Oliver said to those at the dedication. He explained although most assignments for service members usually last for only two years and "You cross paths with many people, some manage to stand out, however brief the association. Capt. Maria Ortiz was absolutely one of those. It wasn't just that she was uniformly acknowledged as excellent at her job, but it was also her positive spirit and energy [which stood out]."

Speaking for the family, Juan Casiano, who was engaged to be married to Ortiz upon her return from Iraq, said, "Her passions were teaching, being a leader, [and] the uniform. Her love was providing health anytime, anywhere. There was no situation she could not handle. She would often say, 'It's OK,' and her legacy lives on not only in her family, but in those who continue to provide the patient care she loved to provide," Casiano added.

Col. Vinette Gordon, deputy chief of the ANC, told the Ortiz family, "It will be OK, because all of the patients who come to the Dialysis Unit at WRNMMC will see the smiling face of Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz on the plaque welcoming them into the unit."

Gordon then read a letter to the Ortiz family from Lt. Gen. Patricia D. Horoho, the first female and first ANC officer to be the Army surgeon general and commanding general of the U.S. Army Medical Corps. Horoho also knew Ortiz.

"Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz will forever be remembered by the Army Medical Department, the U.S. Army and the nation at large for her exceptional service to America's brave men and women in uniform," Horoho stated. She added that while no tribute can provide comfort to the Ortiz family and those who knew and loved her, "the countless service members who will work and receive care in the Capt. Maria Ines Ortiz Dialysis Unit will reflect on her death, but most importantly, her life and the gift she gave to others by virtue of her warm smile, caring touch and courageous service...While her loss is remembered every day, she continues to live in the hearts and minds of those who were fortunate enough to have had the honor of knowing her."

NMPDC Commander's Column

Leader Development vs. Personal Development

The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.

By now, I hope that you have heard about the CNO's Leader Development Strategy. His strategy is built on the foundation of four core elements; Experience, Education, Training and Personal Development. The first three can be thought of as a top-down model to leader development. Personal development is a process where leaders focus internally on self-awareness and is a bottom-up approach to leader development. This "personal" approach is self-imposed with a desire to improve one's ability to operate as a Navy leader.

We will explore the concepts of leader development and personal development a little further. But first, we need to know the differences between Leader and Leadership.

A leader is a person. That includes leadership skills but goes much farther to include character. The exercise of leadership is grounded by our core values and driven by the ethos of the Navy.

Effective leaders enable and mobilize people around them to get things done. A leader is not someone who dominates. You know they're there, but everything is being done by all kinds of other people. How do effective leaders put others needs ahead of their own - by being humble.

So, how do leaders influence people to be more successful than they already are? Leaders put those they lead ahead of themselves. How do leaders measure their efforts as a leader? It's measured by the success of their staff. The most successful leaders are a reflection of the success displayed in the staff they lead.

"If your actions inspire others to dream



Capt. Phillip M. Sanchez,
NMPDC Commanding
Officer

more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." John Quincy Adams.

Leadership is a thing. People exercise leadership by applying knowledge, skills and abilities. Leadership is only one aspect of being a leader. It's inspiring people to maximize the efforts of others toward the achievement of a greater good. The truth of leadership is bound up in service. Real leadership is the ability to make people effective. It's the ability to make them better at what they do.

Leaders make everyone around them better. Effective leadership is like a rising tide - all boats are elevated together with purpose.

Leadership development is defined "as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes" (McCauley, Van Velsor, & Rudeman, The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development, 3rd Ed. 2010). These roles are ones that aid in setting direction, creating alignment and maintaining commitment in groups of people sharing a common work. It's a process that enables leaders to operate effectively at the required levels.

Personal development is the expansion of one's ability to be effective in leadership roles and processes focusing in areas rooted in relationships. Personal development is a mindset in action. It is something that has to be earned. The personal development element gets at who we are as leaders. Self-awareness, coaching, counseling, mentorship, self-evaluation, and life-long learning are all a part of the personal development process.

Personal growth must be "deliberate, planned and consistent." In John Maxwell's

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Bethesda Notebook

New Location for Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society has moved to a temporary long-term location while Building 11 is being remodeled onboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB). The volunteer-run organization is now located at 9285 Constellation Dr., in Building 239, which is the middle building at the bottom of the Z lot.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society provides quick-assist loans of up to \$500 for active duty Sailors and Marines, financial assistance and counseling and emergency travel funds. When coming for assistance, a copy of one's Leave and Earning Statement (LES) form is required.

Before visiting the new office, call 301-295-1207 to make sure someone is available to help you. The office hours remain the same Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

NCOER Training

Non-Commissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER) Training is scheduled for Aug. 18, 19 and 24 from 8 to 10 a.m., and from 2 to 4 p.m. in the USO Building. The training is for all NCOs, officers and Navy personnel who rate an Army NCO. For more information, call Master Sgt. Noble at 301-319-2514.

Bystander Intervention Training

Navy Bystander Intervention to the Fleet Training is held every Friday through Aug. 21. The training is mandatory for Sailors to provide them with instruction to help recognize potential negative situations and how to safely intervene. For times, locations and more information, call HM1 William F. Davis at 301-319-4609, or email William.f.davis3.mil@mail.mil.

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Back-to-School Fair Helps Families Prepare for New School Year

By Andrew Damstedt
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

The best advice Naval Support Activity Bethesda's (NSAB) school liaison officer has for parents getting their children ready to go back to school is to know when school starts.

"One of the first things that I always tell parents when they come in, and it may seem silly, but make sure you know when school starts," said Horace Franklin, NSAB school liaison officer. "When I say when school starts, I mean (do you know) the start time, the end time?"

He said parents should help prepare their children for school by knowing the school schedule – not just the start date, but also when activities start and the date for their school's Back-to-School Night. He suggested parents get a school calendar.

Franklin added that parents should also know the school bus schedule or the route their children will walk to school.

"Have you walked the path with them if they're a walker?," Franklin asked. "Did you go up to the school and find out if



Photo by Andrew Damstedt

Faith Sharp, left, brushes a giant dental model while her brother, Aaron Sharp, watches. The two attended The Fleet and Family Support Center's Back to School Fair in the Building 17 atrium Tuesday with their parents.

there is a school supply list?"

He also advised parents to get their children back on their school sleep schedule.

"A lot of times they've been up playing," he said. "And you may want to do 30 minutes a day or an hour a day to what-

ever time your schedule was ... Gradually get them back on that schedule so that first day is not a total shock and again try to get them on a positive note on the first day of school."

There are a lot of resources military families can use to

help them have a good school year, Franklin said. School liaison services in Naval District Washington include school transition, providing information on local schools, home school support, providing information on graduation requirements and linking them with post-secondary preparation materials, among others.

NSAB's Fleet and Family Support Center held a Back-to-School Fair in the building 17 atrium Aug. 11 to help parents and students to be ready for school this year.

Army Maj. Gerry Sharp, Warrior and Family Coordination Cell director, attended the event with his family. His two children received promotional items and learned about good ways to brush their teeth at the dentistry station.

He said the event gave him useful information on different services available on base through the Fleet & Family Support Center. Also, he said the dentistry/orthodontics and occupational therapy services have helped his family get ready for school.

Another attendee, Army

Capt. Stacy Matthews was with her three children at the Back to School Fair, where they picked up school supplies and information about various services offered on base.

"School is starting back and there was a flyer sent out about school supplies and I just wanted to come and get information and some supplies for my kids for school," she said.

She said while her children may not want to go back to school yet, "they're gonna be ready."

Her son, Isaiah Matthews, who is starting fifth grade, said he is excited to go back to school and use all his new school supplies.

Franklin said Tuesday's event made sure that students have a great start to the school year.

"We want to be sure they have everything so they can start the school year off on a positive note," he said.

For more information, contact the Fleet & Family Services Center at 301-319-4087 or the school liaison officer at 301-295-7849.

Social Wellness: Are Your Relationships Healthy?

By Sharon Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public Affairs
staff writer

Social wellness is a part of resilience, or our ability to withstand traumatic loss and significant disruption in our lives while continuing to function and grow, according to Navy Capt. (Dr.) Steve Brasington, a psychiatrist at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC).

"When we are emotionally vulnerable, negative events are more likely to tax our reserves or interfere with our ability to function," Brasington explained. "Modern living may include hours alone commuting, using a computer or updating social media. Time spent face-to-face has slipped as fewer and fewer know the names of neighbors, or take the time to chat on the sidewalk or porch."

Fostering relationships plays a big part of resiliency and social wellness, said Public Health Service Capt. Dwayne Buckingham, Ph.D., a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and service chief of Resiliency and Psychological Health.

"In the military, we use the term 'unit.' Your unit is your social circle that's closest to you, at least in the workplace in the military environment. You should have a relationship with them that fosters well-being and good health," Buckingham said.

The resiliency chief explained the basic human need to belong motivates individuals to seek relationships. Social wellness helps foster relationships with different people that "get us through the tough times."

He offered three tips for maintaining social wellness in the workplace:

- 1.) Treat people the way you want to be treated. Extend a hand out to a colleague;
- 2.) Be sociable. Engage and interface with the people that you work with. Speak and attempt to engage in conversation so you can be a support system; and
- 3.) Participate in activities that foster social and community wellness: join a committee, plan an office party.

"It takes a healthy environment for individuals to be healthy, and healthy individu-



Courtesy photo

als create a healthy environment," Buckingham said.

Effective leaders foster social wellness by creating working environments where employees feel respected and safe to appropriately express their thoughts and feelings, [as well as] collaborate with others, explained Marie C. Salimbeni, Ph.D., LCSW, service chief, Education, Training and Research, Department of Social Work. Leaders and their staff members should get to know each other, and always be pres-

ent in order to increase personal connections.

Maintaining healthy relationships while balancing the demands of work and home life is a challenge individuals sometimes face when striving to improve social wellness, she said. Engage in open communication and take time out of busy schedules to acknowledge those individuals that are important to you, the social worker suggested.

"The simple act of letting those we care about know that

we care about them can help increase their understanding that they are an important part of our lives," Salimbeni explained.

By providing physically-safe environments that respect diversity and include minority voices, children can develop social wellness too, explained Brasington, a pediatric psychiatrist. "To feel emotionally secure, children require adults who have the capacity for intimacy, closeness and warmth," he said.

Adults can foster social wellness of children by using words of support, encouragement and hope, not violent actions or deeds designed to intimidate or control. Adults can also choose to participate in groups that build community and good jobs, or schools to the neighborhood that will provide a positive environment for children to grow up in, according to Brasington. Building connections decreases isolation and estrangement, he said.

"Let others get to know you and you may get to know yourself better, and increase your resilience," Brasington said.

Protect, Take Care of Your Eyes Every Day

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public
Affairs Office

July was Eye Injury Prevention Month, and August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month as well as Cataract Awareness Month, but health-care providers at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) encourage you to take care of yours and your child's eyes every day of the year.

"Just as strapping on a seat-belt every time you drive a car could save your life, reaching for a pair of sunglasses or protective eyewear whenever you engage in occupational or recreational activities that may present unexpected foreign bodies, might just save your eyes," says Dr. Joseph Pasternak, staff physician in Ophthalmology Service, Department of Surgery, at WRNMMC.

Now, just as parents are making sure their children's immunizations are up-to-date to go back to school, is a good time for parents to get their children's eyes checked, ac-



Courtesy photo

Now is also a good time for parents to get their children's eyes checked as they prepare to send them back to school, according to officials from the American Academy of Ophthalmologists.

cording to officials from the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO). They explain poor vision can hinder a child's progress in school and other activities.

One in 20 preschool-aged children have a vision problem that could result in permanent vision loss if left untreated, and many of these problems aren't caught until children

are at grade school level, according to the AAO. They add an estimated 80 percent of preschoolers do not receive vision screenings, and nearly 25 percent of school-aged children have vision problems.

Parents are encouraged to set up eye exams for their children annually. Parents should also be aware of signs that may indicate their child may have a vision problem, such as wandering or crossed eyes, a family history of childhood vision problems, difficulty in reading or viewing distant objects, and squinting or turning the head in an unusual manner while watching television or using a visual electronic device such as a computer.

Children will also be enrolling in athletic programs at this time of year, and poor vision could affect athletic performance as well as result in injury, according to the AAO. It's important to make sure your child wears protective eyewear while participating in sports or recreational activities to avoid injury, Pasternak said. In addition, toys for chil-

dren should also be age-appropriate, and toys with sharp or protruding parts should be avoided.

Sunglasses are also recommended to protect eyes from the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays which can damage eyes and harm vision. In addition, children should wash their hands regularly and avoid touching or rubbing their eyes to prevent the spread of conjunctivitis, or pink eye, which causes numerous missed school days each year, according to the AAO.

Children aren't the only ones who need to protect their eyes.

"There is absolutely no question that wearing eye protection is the single most effective way to prevent both occupational and recreational ocular injury," Pasternak continued. "The majority of injuries result from small particles or objects striking or abrading the eye. Examples include foreign bodies sustained while working in the garage or shop, under a car, gardening, doing yard work, housework, or rid-

ing a bicycle or in a convertible.

"During any activity that might have even the slightest chance of exposure to a foreign body or accidental trauma, the default should always be to wear eye protection sunglasses or protective eyewear," Pasternak added.

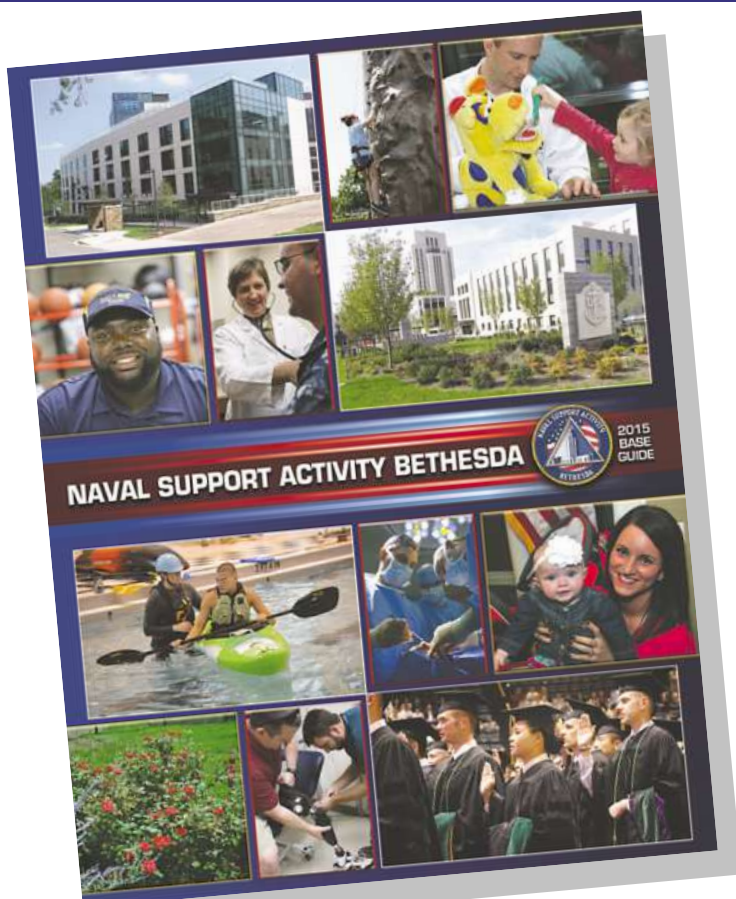
He explained exposure to UV rays is not only a factor in causing cataract progression, but also in worsening of macular degeneration. Wearing UV protective lenses can reduce ultraviolet exposure, he added.

Pasternak explained that a cataract is "any opacification of the natural crystalline lens of the eye," resulting in blurred vision.

"Cataracts come in a variety of shapes, densities and locations within the lens, and are quite variable in how they present and how severely they affect the vision," Pasternak continued. He added cataracts can be caused by "aging, genetics and UV exposure. They can also be congenital, caused by

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WRNMMC Nurses Lead Celebration of Breastfeeding Week, Month

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public Affairs staff writer

Wearing pink T-shirts with the message “Breast is Best,” Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) nurses Army Lt. Col. Dorene Owen, Leasa Freese, Me-Sue Njie, Valerie Mair and Bridget Manhertz led the celebration of World Breastfeeding Week Aug. 1-7 at WRNMMC.

August is also National Breastfeeding Month, and Freese, a registered nurse and board certified lactation consultant in the Mother Infant Care Center at WRNMMC, explained the “many benefits of breastfeeding and providing human milk to babies.”

“For the baby, breastfeeding provides the ideal nutrition for the infant,” Freese said. “Breastmilk contains antibodies that help the baby fight off viruses and bacteria. It lowers the risks of diabetes, obesity, asthma, allergies and certain childhood cancers. Breastfeeding plays a role in the prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and has been linked to higher IQ scores in later childhood.

“For the mother, breastfeeding lowers the risk of osteoporosis, breast and ovarian cancers,” Freese continued. “Breastfeeding releases the hormone oxytocin, which helps the uterus return to normal size and may reduce bleeding after birth. Breastfeeding gives the mother time to relax quietly as she bonds with her infant. It also saves time and money,” she added.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends babies be exclusively breastfed (with no additional foods) for about the first six months of life, Freese said. “Once complementary foods are added, the mother should continue to offer her milk for at least a year and as long as the mother wants to continue breastfeeding. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends continued breastfeeding up to three years. Most mothers in the United States breastfeed for one to two-and-a-half years,” she added.

Freese explained although breastfeeding can be challenging for some women, “With the help of staff in Labor and Delivery [at WRNMMC] and Postpartum, the mother and father can gain confidence. There is also help after discharge in our Pediatric Clinic. Here at WRNMMC, we have two board certified lactation consultants (IBCLCs), as well as nurses and corpsmen who have been trained in the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI).

“The BFHI is a global program that was launched by the WHO and the United Nations Children’s Fund in 1991, to encourage and recognize hospitals and birthing centers that offer an optimal level of care for infant feeding and mother/baby bonding,” Freese continued. “BFHI assists hospitals in giving all mothers the information, confidence, and skills necessary to successfully initiate and continue breastfeeding their babies or feeding formula safely, and gives recognition to those who have done so.”

She said another challenge for mothers in breastfeeding is returning to work, especially for active duty members. “Maternity leave is different for each service. Returning to work six weeks after birth is difficult. Mothers are breastfeeding, as well as pumping and trying to maintain an adequate milk supply. Many do well, but others need help. It is recommended that they see one of our [lactation consultants] to help them with their milk supply.”

WRNMMC provides prenatal classes, in addition to breastfeeding and returning to work classes to parents, Freese said. She explained the classes allow parents to make their own feeding choice, and the benefits of breast feeding are discussed.

“We have two IBCLCs on staff, and there is community lactation support at other military bases in addition to in the general community,” Freese said. “Tricare now covers the reimbursement of breast pumps and many other lactation services.” She added there are currently two

pump rooms in the hospital for employees as well.

For more information about breastfeeding at WRNMMC, call Leasa Freese at 301-400-2352. Information about breastfeeding is also available on the Office on Women’s Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ website at <http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/>.

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trauma, medications, diabetes and occupational exposure.”

Eating foods high in vitamin E, such as almonds, spinach, hazelnuts, broccoli, kale, Swiss chard and avocados, can help reduce a person's risk for developing cataracts, according to the American Optometric Association.

Pasternak recommends people be aware of blurred vision, haloes around lights, and loss of contrast when in low lighting situations as signs for eye disease or damage.

“An annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist is sufficient for most people with minimal visual issues. Your doctor will determine if you should be seen more frequently,” he added.

For more information about eye health and safety, visit www.prevent-blindness.org or www.aaao.org.

DEVELOPMENT

Continued from pg. 2

book, *Developing Leaders* he points out that, leaders need to “set aside time daily for growth.” The most effective way that people learn is through frequent, short sessions. Therefore, spend regular-consistent time reading, learning and reflecting on leadership development and personal development. Then apply those concepts to solidify and make it a part of one's character.

Both leader development and personal development are foundational to what is expected in those in the Department of Defense, whether you serve on Active Duty or the Reserves, Civil Service or as a Contract employee.

We have the most highly skilled professionals in our armed forces. Through a plethora of experience, extensive edu-

cation and a wide array training opportunities, we have outstanding aviators, submariners, ship drivers, engineers, lawyers, doctors, dentists, nurses, administrators, etc., in the Navy. What's needed to move our organization into greatness is to spend more time in the realm of personal development.

To a large extent, personal development in the Navy is left up to the individual. Without some structure, it's unclear what kinds of leaders are being developed. Therefore, to prepare our people to face the challenges of the future, we also need to include the whole person in a deliberate way through a continuum of development throughout their career.

The Navy is committed to providing appropriate opportunities for leader development, whether it is through Experience, Education or Training. This should be coupled with structured personal development and a self-motivated desire to grow through, professional reading, mentoring and acquiring self-awareness tools.

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